

APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

March
23rd, 2026

Pressure to Pass DHS Funding Builds

The shutdown of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is at risk of breaking the record for the longest-ever funding lapse for any federal agency if the White House and congressional Democrats aren't able to strike a deal this week. Congress is scheduled to take a two-week recess for Passover and Easter starting Friday, raising the stakes for a resolution before lawmakers leave Washington. While the Senate is considering staying in session if the shutdown is not resolved, House GOP leaders do not plan to cut their break short in hopes of making a deal, further complicating the path forward.

As the impasse drags on, the operational impacts are becoming more evident, particularly across the nation's airports. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is facing staffing shortages as unpaid agents call out or seek temporary work elsewhere, leading to longer security lines and delays at major travel hubs. In response to growing concerns about airport security and crowd management, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) personnel have been deployed to assist at certain airports today, a move that could ultimately worsen tensions with the public.

Meanwhile, the President has said he's uninterested in signing a deal on DHS unless the SAVE America Act is included, further complicating negotiations. He's also shot down proposals to break up DHS funding, including plans by Senate Republicans to fund most of DHS through a bipartisan deal and fund ICE through budget reconciliation later.

Key FY27 Funding Deadlines in Flux

Lawmakers are still waiting for the President's budget request for fiscal year 2027, which they were told they'd receive by the end of this month. The request is expected in the next week or two. Meanwhile, House Appropriations Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) is planning a "very aggressive" markup schedule as he seeks to approve all 12 of the fiscal year 2027 bills before the July 4th recess. While FY27 markups in the House could begin as soon as late April; it's unlikely that we will see similar movement in the Senate.